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the teeth will be unable to resist the impulse to turn their big war machines loose. That peace, or what is called peace, has so far been kept by every device of diplomacy, has been to the surprise of nearly everybody, and is not the least ground for believing that war will not finally result.

The same tendency of armaments is showing itself in the case of our own, small as they yet are. What they lack in size they make up in ambitiousness. The men who manipulate their development, who are dependent upon them for promotion and fame, are coolly and calculatingly examining the horizon, to see where friction and prospect of war can be most easily gotten up. It is natural that they should do so. It is part of their business.

A year and more ago the naval board was cogitating thus, and fell upon Germany as the country with which we were certain to have a naval war in the near future. They of course found us unprepared for such an emergency. The idea was immediately afterward exploited publicly by senators and others. Recently the thing has been taken up again, with more intensity and directness. Germany has been declared to be craftily laying designs against South America and certain islands within "our sphere." The Monroe doctrine has been declared in great peril. Admiral Dewey's prophecy has been emphasized, and remade by the Admiral himself, that our next war will be with Germany. The result has been that Germany has been so stirred up that she has felt herself compelled in self-respect to ask at Washington what it all means, and to make an official statement that she has absolutely no designs against the United States, South America, Monroe doctrine, or anything else on this side, but that she sincerely desires to be on friendly terms with us. The war promoters will no doubt chuckle over what they have accomplished, and bide their time for another stroke.

There has been nothing whatever in Germany's conduct in this hemisphere to make any fair-minded American think that she has any colonial designs here. These army and navy promoters and their allies have manufactured the whole idea solely to advance their own aims, it would seem. If, however, the insinuations are continued from time to time, they will produce the very thing which these men, with so much pretended fear, assume to exist. It will offend any power like Germany to be thus accused. If the accusations are continued long enough by men in high positions, the masses of the people will come to believe what is said, a feeling of dislike of Germany will become general, fixed enmity on her side will arise, and with it "designs."

Even the Germans in South America, hundreds of thousands of whom are going there to escape the military burdens at home, and to try to improve their condition in freedom and quietness, without the least thought of colonial scheming, will at last grow in-

dignant at being thus covered with reproaches. The result will ultimately be retaliation, colonial schemes in South America, and fixed estrangement between Germany and our country. This is the price we shall have to pay for such reckless and groundless talk, or, in other words, for having a body of ambitious militarists (supported and urged on by ambitious politicians), who naturally enough propose to expand their business.

When we compel nations, by the offensive and false surmises of prominent public men, to ask for explanations and make protestations of their innocence, we are not far from serious misunderstandings and strained relations with them. Harmful as all this will be in the end, and deplored too when the baneful hour comes, it is our certain fate if we continue to coquet with militarism, and allow its promoters to carry on their mischievous tactics at the heart of the nation. The work is going stealthily on while the people sleep, too busy with their own interests to call the administration of the nation's affairs to account. We are in greater danger of war to-day with foreign powers than we have ever before been in our history, because we are ourselves creating the unfortunate conditions out of which such danger grows. We are singing the song of peace while our hand is casting upon the earth the seed of hate and war.

National Honor.

On the 18th of May the British foreign office received through Lord Pauncefoot the draft of a new canal treaty. The exact contents of the treaty are of course not yet made known, and will not be, except in the most general way, until the new project has been matured by the two governments. The document, in the drafting of which Lord Pauncefoot has doubtless been freely consulted, is said to be a redraft of the previous treaty, with modifications supposed to accord with the views of United States senators, on whose votes the fate of the treaty will depend. But of this only surmises can yet be made.

It is not easy to see just how, considering the views held in London and among United States senators, the two governments can easily get together on the subject. The British government declined to accept the former treaty as amended, because it practically cast out the principle of neutralization incorporated in the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. It will not be likely now to recede from this position materially. On the other hand, the Senate will probably not accept any convention that does not put the canal, if built by our government, under the entire control of the government in time of war.

Under these circumstances, and in view of the improbability that a canal will be built with private capital, it is proposed by prominent Americans that when Congress meets next December it should pro-

ceed at once to abrogate the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, and go ahead and construct the canal without consulting England or anybody else. It is not surprising that such a proposition should emanate from Senator Lodge and others of his type, but it is almost incomprehensible that a man of the character and large diplomatic experience of Hon. John W. Foster should advise this procedure, as he did in his recent deliverance at Yale.

This course, which would be bad enough if there were no history behind it, would, after all that has happened, bring about such a state of ill-feeling and estrangement between the two countries as has not existed for a long time, if at all. This of itself would be ample reason under the circumstances for abstaining from any such arbitrary proceeding. A single act of this nature, against a kindred nation with which we have such varied and intimate relations, might easily destroy in a day an amount of good feeling and trust which a quarter of a century has been required to accumulate.

But there is a much more serious objection. To abrogate the Clayton-Bulwer treaty in this way would be an act of unusual national dishonor, for several reasons. The negotiation of the recent canal convention was begun by our government. The Hay-Pauncefote treaty was drafted by our State Department, presented in good faith to the British government and accepted without change. It was then so modified by the Senate as to render its approval by the British foreign office impossible. These negotiations have in themselves laid our government under certain obligations to Great Britain, which make it impossible without her consent to abrogate the old treaty with honor.

Further, under international law, even in its present imperfect state, the inviolability of treaties is held to be the first law of nations. Our government has been among the foremost to maintain this principle, both theoretically and practically. In this phase of its development international law has reached a point where it is in harmony with high morality. In spite, therefore, of Mr. Foster's reported declaration that "this government can declare itself under no obligation to any power," it is, because of its own profession and conduct in the past and the present demands of public international morality, under very binding obligations not only to Great Britain, but to the whole family of nations, as well as to its own publicly declared ideals. To deny and selfishly thrust from it all these obligations by a mere arbitrary stroke of the pen would be to draw upon it the just condemnation and lasting distrust of all peoples.

It is argued by Mr. Foster as well as by many others that we are justified in abrogating the treaty, because of the violations of it by Great Britain in her encroachments upon Central America. If this reasoning were true, the abrogation ought to have taken

place many years ago. The time for it would now have passed. Our government has recognized and maintained the existence and obligations of the treaty up to the present time, and there would have been no thought of one-sided abrogation, if the construction of the canal were still considered a matter for private capital. The government has thus put itself under obligation not to abrogate it now, when no new violations of Great Britain have occurred. The *Philadelphia Public Ledger* is, furthermore, entirely right in its contention that violations of this and other treaty compacts in the past "furnish no justification for further international sins of a similar nature."

The reasons assigned to show that we should be justified in summarily abrogating the treaty are the changed conditions of the time. We have grown from twenty-three to seventy-six millions of people. Our commerce has immensely increased, and we have become a big world power. Our "interests" demand that the canal should be owned and absolutely controlled by us. Not a word is said in the contention about our having any duties to the world in the way of trying to lift it to a plane above that of merely selfish interest and aggrandizement. All this is deliberately put out of sight and practically trampled under foot.

If conditions had so changed that it were to England's interest to have the treaty abrogated, and to our serious or even small disadvantage, does anybody suppose that these men would be demanding the abrogation, or that they would not instantly resent any attempt at it by Great Britain? The whole present contention comes from purely selfish grounds, and means when analyzed that a nation's selfish conception of its own interests is the supreme and only rule by which its international conduct is to be determined; that its word and honor have no binding force beyond this. This is strange and ominous doctrine to come from American lips. It is a straight and open return to the principles of barbarism, where every individual is a law unto himself, and where morality and benevolence have no social standing.

We do not believe that our interests demand the abrogation of the treaty as proposed, or the building and control of the canal by us. These interests would be just as well conserved, in our judgment much better conserved in the long run, if the canal were built, owned, controlled and absolutely neutralized by the nations acting in concert! But if we did believe that our immediate material interests demanded the abrogation of the compact in the way proposed, we should still be utterly opposed to the nation's sacrificing its moral character and honor, and its good name for trustworthiness, by so doing. The ultimate effect of such a course of summary selfishness and dishonor would be many times as disastrous as any loss that could possibly come to us through failure to have absolute disposition of the canal.